

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT
ACADEMIC YEAR: 2012– 2013

Part A: General Information**Subject area and awards being examined**

Faculty / School of:

Food Science and Nutrition

Subject(s):

Food Science

Programme(s) / Module(s):

MSc Food Science,
Food Science (Food Biotechnology)
MSc Quality & Innovation

FOOD5016M - Physical aspects of Food
FOOD5045M - Microbiological and Chemical Food Safety
FOOD5055M - Food Processing
FOOD5071M - Research Project
FOOD5115M - Colloid and Dairy Science
FOOD5270 - Food Analysis
FOOD5405M - Professional Development for Employment and Research
FOOD5470M - Sensory properties, Food Texture and Structure
FOOD5241M - Food structure and function
FOOD5196M - Impacts of food processing on nutritional quality
FOOD5280M - Functional food
FOOD5460M - Food product & development
FOOD5480 - Food safety and quality

Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):

MSc

Completed report

The completed report should be attached to an e-mail and sent as soon as possible, and no later than six weeks after the relevant meeting of the Board of Examiners, to exexadmin@leeds.ac.uk.

Alternatively you can post your report to:

Head of Academic Quality and Standards
Academic Quality and Standards Team
Room 12:81, EC Stoner Building
The University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT

Part B: Comments for the Institution on the Examination Process and Standards**Matters for Urgent Attention**

If there are any areas which you think require urgent attention before the programme is offered again please note them in this box

None in particular. The only relevant subjects upraised by some of the students is related to a certain difficulty they encountered due to the gap between their prior learning experience to approach food processing and food sensory teaching

Only applicable in first year of appointment

Were you provided with copies of previous relevant External Examiners' reports and the response of the School to these?

I was always engaged in the 2010-2011 and 2011-12 academic years

For Examiners completing their term of appointment

Please comment on your experience of the programme(s) over the period of your appointment, remarking in particular on changes from year to year and the progressive development and enhancement of the learning and teaching provision, on standards achieved, on marking and assessment and the procedures of the School

Not applicable.

Even I've been external examiner for three Academic Years (2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13) The Head of the School ask me the availability to prolong the appointment to the undersigned as external examiner even for the next Academic year 2013-2014. I highly appreciated this proposal and I accepted to act as external examiner for the next Academic Year.

1. Please indicate the extent to which the programme Aims and Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) were commensurate with the level of the award

- *The appropriateness of the Intended Learning Outcomes for the programme(s)/modules and of the structure and content of the programme(s);*
- *The extent to which standards are appropriate for the award or award element under consideration.*

Learning outcomes are adequate to the level of the awards for the MSc degrees. Nevertheless most of the modules are designed on the basis of the specific competencies of the research groups but I appreciated very much the efforts to overcome to the weakness including more microbiology aspects and food legislation in order to give to the programme a more general basis on food technology, food science and all the topics needed to meet a high quality of the teaching.

Consistent improvements on those aspects have been done from the previous academic year.

Since the fewer number of students in respect of the previous Academic Years, a good background level of the students has been recorded, mainly in Food engineering and Food technology.

2. Did the Aims and ILOs meet the expectations of the national subject benchmark (where relevant)?

- *The comparability of the programme(s) with similar programme(s) at other institutions and against national benchmarks and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.*

Objectives of the Master course are quite well individuated. The academic standards of both MSc seem to be appropriate to the work at Master level.

Students showed high satisfaction of the programmes. In particular regarding the MSc quality and Innovation that seems to be a well advanced programme. Students appreciated very much the final project and teamwork, especially this year where few students were enrolled.

3. Please comment on the assessment methods and the appropriateness of these to the ILOs

- *The design and structure of the assessment methods, and the arrangements for the marking of modules and the classification of awards;*
- *The quality of teaching, learning and assessment methods that may be indicated by student performance.*

The assessment methods in general are well improved in terms of clarity of the marks and homogeneity of the judgement among the evaluators.

Each questions were given in separate book . Student code was correctly placed. Marks are correctly given on separate sheets. questions are based on specific lessons or seminars also from external experts. Marks sometimes are not in the book cover but only in the summary scheme.

Marks seem to be adequate to the level of the answers.

Each marker gives overall evaluation and comments. It means that it was very easy to understand the evaluation methodology.

4. Were students given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the Aims and ILOs?

- *The academic standards demonstrated by the students and, where possible, their performance in relation to students on comparable courses;*
- *The strengths and weaknesses of the students as a cohort.*

Yes, in general students are given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the Aims and ILOs.

The preparation of the final Research projects demonstrated a good achievement of Aims and ILOs and it is finalised in generally high level of papers in both scientific contents and format aspects. The project level is generally high for an only one year master, especially related to the labelling and packaging design, that's most impressive . Nevertheless students asked for more time to plan the project and more information for the final project. In MSc Quality and Innovation feedback and report are related mainly regarding the laboratory work and courses are mainly exam based, on the basis of paper work or case studies.

Statistical methodologies are requested at high level and if students have different background it could be difficult to follow and to overcome the examination. Nevertheless, statistic applied to sensory analysis are well appropriated in the exam papers.

In 5115 Food colloid and Dairy science, perhaps the student have a lack of background in order to approach this discipline and it should be nice to consider also other food products (other than dairy).

Very good exercises in Food Analysis works, meaning a high level of teaching.

5. For Examiners responsible for programmes that include clinical practice components, please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum

Not applicable

6. Please comment on the nature and effectiveness of enhancements to the programme(s) and modules since the previous year

It would be particularly helpful if you could also identify areas of good practice which are worthy of wider dissemination.

Student Handbook has been much improved in course presentation and understanding. It is planned to attract good students to be part of an excellence teaching pathway.

7. Please comment on the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching

This may include examples of curriculum design informed by current research in the subject; practice informed by research; students undertaking research.

Curriculum design are quite strictly related to the research work carried out in the department especially for FOOD5115M - Colloid and Dairy Science, FOOD5460M - Food product & development and FOOD5241M - Food structure and function and part of other modules.

Nevertheless, microbiology teaching have be improved in this Academic year.

For Examiners involved in mentoring arrangements

8. If you have acted as a mentor to a new External Examiner or have received mentor support please comment here on the arrangements

I've only briefly explained to the new External Examiner, <>, some procedures and we have been both involved in the meeting with students of all the MSc programmes (Food Science, Quality and Innovation, Nutrition and Food Science and Nutrition)

9. The University and its Schools provide guidance for External Examiners as to their roles, powers and responsibilities. Please indicate whether this material was sufficient for you to act effectively as an External Examiner.

- *Whether External Examiners have sufficient access to the material needed to make the required judgements and whether they are encouraged to request additional information.*

Yes, I as well as the last Academic Year, we had access to all the documents we needed and the well detailed student's Handbook. During the year I had materials to be examined (e.g. proposed exam papers and resit marks) in due time. I received all the final projects and papers and all the material to evaluate the groups working in product development teamwork. The results of the NPD teams were very impressive.

10. Did you receive appropriate documentation relating to the programmes and/or parts of programmes for which you have responsibility, e.g. programme specifications or module handbooks, marking criteria?

- *The coherence of the policies and procedures relating to External Examiners and whether they match the explicit roles they are asked to perform.*

Yes, I receive appropriate documentation about the programmes specification and it was complete and coherent. I had the assessment details and it would be good to have access to the assessment criteria at the time of the papers examination.

11. Were you provided with all draft examination papers/assessments? Was the nature and level of the questions appropriate? If not, were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?

Yes, also this year all the examination procedures were very well prepared; I had the possibility to check in advance the exam papers and to the questions and suggestions.

Two meetings were done with students that were well attended and they showed an improved level of satisfaction on assessment procedures and also the module assessment. Probably this year with a minor number of students the assessments were better established

12. Was sufficient assessed / examined work made available to enable you to have confidence in your evaluation of the standard of student work? Were the scripts clearly marked/annotated?

In respect to last years, the marking system has been improved and all the module's marking scheme is now always completed and fully understandable overcoming some difficulties I underlined in previous reports

13. Was the choice of subjects for dissertations appropriate? Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate?

Students asked to have more possibilities to choose the topic and more time to develop the plan. As already mentioned above, the quality and the subjects of the dissertations are appropriate and of high scientific level

14. Were the administrative arrangements satisfactory for the whole process, including the operation of the Board of Examiners? Were you able to attend the meeting? Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Board?

Yes. I was attending the meeting and it was run in a very good way, with the possibility to understand and follow all the decisions that the Board of Examiner took. The whole process was very satisfying and the external examiners had the chance to intervene at any time and ask explanations. Recommendations of the Board were always appropriate.

15. Were appropriate procedures in place to give due consideration to mitigating circumstances and medical evidence?

Yes, also this year during the Board of Examiner's meeting in few circumstances has been decided in order to mitigate critical situations and go towards student's needs.

Other comments

Please use this box if you wish to make any further comments not covered elsewhere on the form

On last year, in the 2012 report, I propoedl for the Quality and Innovation MSc programme to introduce for the final evaluation an individual short final work other than the group project. I believe that this suggestion could be still useful.

Dear <>,

Thank you for your External Examiner's Report for the 2012/13 session. The MSc Food Science, MSc Food Science (Food Biotechnology) and MSc Food Quality and Innovation students have told us that they were pleased that they had had a chance to meet with you during your visit. It was pleasing that you have reported from your meeting with the students that there is a high level of satisfaction with the programmes.

It was also pleasing to note that you considered that you felt that the marking system has improved and that marking schemes for all modules were available this year. However, you also stated that you did not have access to all of the assessment criteria at the time of examining the papers. All of the assessment criteria will be supplied along with papers and coursework examples.

With regard to your suggestion that the Team Project (Industrial Project: Food Innovation) might include an individual report in addition to the group reports. The module manager is to review the module assessment with respect to learning outcomes and will consider this along with the learning outcomes of the module and so assess whether this would be done.

You have rightly identified that most of the modules in some programmes are based on competencies within our research groups, which is in keeping with our intentions to align our research and teaching, and to deliver research based teaching on all of our programmes.

As you had noted previously, the School has some weakness in microbiology and food legislation, and we are glad that you now note the effort that has been made to overcome the weakness and that you have seen consistent improvement in these areas.

The student comment with regard to students wanting earlier information of the research projects, and more time to plan for research projects will be addressed with the students. In previous years, students were given early information and were required to plan the projects at an earlier stage. Students at the time complained that this interfered with work and revision for semester 2 examinations, and it is for this reason that we now do not give any work on the research projects at an earlier stage.

The School thanks you for your work as an External Examiner and we have valued your comments and suggestions over the last year, and we look forward to meeting with you again in July,

Best Wishes